REPORT
OF THE
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE
ON HUMAN RIGHTS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 24 (A/46/24)

UNITED NATIONS

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New York, 1991

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

1. The Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights held its first session at Geneva from 9 to 13 September 1991, as mandated by the General Assembly in paragraph 6 of its resolution 45/155 of 18 December 1990. It held eight meetings during the session.

A. Opening of the session

2. The session was opened by the Secretary-General of the World Conference, who also addressed the Preparatory Committee at its first meeting. (See document A/CONF.157/PC/12 for the text of this statement.)

B. Attendance

3. The session was attended by representatives of the following States, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, liberation movements, other organizations and non-governmental organizations:

States

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zimbabwe

Human rights bodies

Commission on Human Rights, Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Committee against Torture, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Human Rights Committee, Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Commission on Human Rights

United Nations bodies

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Specialized agencies

International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund

Intergovernmental organizations

Commission of the European Communities, Commonwealth Secretariat, Council of Europe, League of Arab States, Organization of African Unity

Other organizations

International Committee of the Red Cross

Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

(Category I)

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, International Council of Voluntary Agencies, International Council of Women, International Council on Social Welfare, International Movement ATD Fourth World, International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Soroptimist International, World Confederation of Labour, World Federation of Trade Unions, World Federation of United Nations Associations, Zonta International

(Category II)

Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, American Association of Jurists, American Association of Retired Persons, Amnesty International, Baha'i International Community, Caritas Internationalis, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches, Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations, Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers), International Commission of Jurists, International Council of Jewish Women, International Federation on Ageing, International Federation for Housing and Planning, International Federation of Human Rights, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, International Federation Terre des Hommes, International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, International Movement for Fraternal Union Among Races and Peoples, International Organization for the Development of Freedom of Education, International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Service for Human Rights Latin American Federation of Associations of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees, Law Association for Asia and the Pacific, Medical Women's International Association, Union of Arab Jurists, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, World Assembly of Youth, World Federation for Mental Health, World Federation of Methodist Women, World Jewish Congress, World Union for Progressive Judaism

(Roster)

World Association for the School as an Instrument of Peace, Minority Rights Group, Planetary Citizens

4. Details of the composition of delegations appear in document A/CONF.157/PC/INF.1.

C. Documentation

5. A list of the documents before the Preparatory Committee at its first session is contained in annex III to the present report.

D. Election of officers

6. At its 2nd meeting, on 10 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee elected the following officers:

Chairman: Ms. Halima Embarek Warzazi (Morocco)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Horacio Arteaga (Venezuela)
Mr. Fan Guoxiang (China)
Mr. John Swift (Ireland)

Rapporteur: Mr. Zdzislaw Kedzia (Poland)

E. Adoption of the agenda and rules of procedure

7. The Preparatory Committee had before it the provisional agenda for its first session document (A/CONF.157/PC/1) and annotations thereto (A/CONF.157/PC/1/Add.1). At its 2nd meeting, on 10 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted the agenda on the recommendation of the Bureau. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as annex I.

8. At the same meeting, the Preparatory Committee decided, as recommended by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1991/30 of 5 March 1991, that the rules of procedure governing its meetings should in so far as applicable be those of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

F. Organization of work

9. The Preparatory Committee had before it a programme of work proposed by the secretariat (A/CONF.157/PC/2/Rev.1).

10. At its 2nd meeting, on 10 September 1991, the Committee decided to consider the items on its agenda in the following order: 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7 and 8 jointly; 9.

II. STATEMENTS 1/

11. Statements on items 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agenda were made by the representatives of the following States: Algeria (7th), Argentina (7th), Austria (7th), Bangladesh (3rd), Brazil (7th), Bulgaria (7th), Canada (6th), Chile (6th), China (6th), Colombia (7th), Costa Rica (6th), Cuba (7th), Cyprus (7th), Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (6th), Egypt (7th), El Salvador (7th), Germany (2nd and 7th), Honduras (7th), Hungary (6th), India (6th), Indonesia (6th), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (7th), Iraq (5th), Japan (7th), Jordan (2nd), Mexico (7th), Myanmar (7th), Netherlands (on behalf of the European Community) (2nd), New Zealand (6th), Norway (on behalf of the Nordic States) (2nd), Panama (7th), Peru (6th), Philippines (2nd), Poland (7th), Republic of Korea (7th), Romania (6th), Senegal (3rd and 7th), Sri Lanka (6th), Sudan (7th), Switzerland (6th), Syrian Arab Republic (7th), Tunisia (7th), Turkey (3rd), Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (2nd), United States of America (3rd), Uruguay (6th), Venezuela (7th), Yugoslavia (6th).

12. Statements on items 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agenda were made by observers for the following human rights bodies: Commission on Human Rights (3rd), Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (5th), Committee Against Torture (4th), Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (4th), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2nd), Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (4th), Human Rights Committee (3rd), Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Commission on Human Rights (7th).

13. A statement on items 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agenda was made by the observer for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (5th).

14. Statements on items 5, 6 7 and 8 of the agenda were made by observers for the following specialized agencies:

International Labour Organisation (4th), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (3rd), World Health Organization (4th).

15. A statement on items 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agenda was made by an observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross (4th).

16. Statements on items 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agenda were made by observers for the following non-governmental organizations: American Association of Jurists (4th), Amnesty International (4th), Baha'i International Community (4th), Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations (3rd), International Commission of Jurists (4th), International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (4th), International Council of Jewish Women (4th), International Council of Voluntary Agencies (4th), International Council on Social Welfare (3rd), International Federation for Housing and Planning (3rd),

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1/ The numbers in brackets refer to the meeting at which the statement was made.

International Movement ATD Fourth World (4th), International Movement for Fraternal Union Among Races and Peoples (4th), International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (5th), Latin American Federation of Associations of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees (5th), Law Association for Asia and the Western Pacific (4th), World Association for the School as an Instrument of Peace (5th), World Confederaton of Labour (5th), World Federation for Mental Health (4th), World Federation of the United Nations Associations (5th), World Federation of Trade Unions (3rd).

III. AGENDA, RULES OF PROCEDURE, DATES, DURATION, VENUE OF AND PARTICIPATION AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE

17. At its 8th meeting, held on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted decision PC/1, entitled "Convening of the World Conference on Human Rights". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

18. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 45/155, the Preparatory Committee, at its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, adopted decision PC/3, entitled "Participation of representatives of least developed countries in the preparatory meetings and the conference itself". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

19. At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted decision PC/6, entitled "Participation of human rights experts in the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

IV. PREPARATORY MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

20. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 45/155, the Preparatory Committee, at its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, adopted decision PC/3, entitled "Participation of representatives of least developed countries in the preparatory meetings and the Conference itself". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

21. With reference to the preparatory activities for the World Conference, the Preparatory Committee, at its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, adopted decision PC/1, entitled "Convening of the World Conference on Human Rights", in which it made a proposal concerning publicity for the Conference and the preparatory process thereto. For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

22. At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted decision PC/4, entitled "Regional meetings in preparation for the World Conference on Human Rights". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

V. STUDIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

23. At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted decision PC/5, entitled "Studies and documentation for the World Conference". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

24. At the same meeting, immediately prior to the adoption of the decision, the Chairman stated that it was the understanding of the Preparatory Committee that the Secretary-General of the Conference should consult all the regional groups before undertaking the studies referred to in subparagraph 1 of draft decision 5.

VI. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF FUTURE SESSIONS OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

25. At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted decision PC/2, entitled "Future sessions of the Preparatory Committee". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

26. At the same meeting the Preparatory Committee adopted decision PC/6, entitled "Participation of human rights experts in the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference". For the text of the decision, see annex II to the present report.

VII. PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE AT ITS FIRST SESSION

27. At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, a statement of the programme budget implications of the decisions adopted by the Preparatory Committee at its first session was made.

28. At the same meeting, statements in connection with the programme budget implications of the decisions adopted by the Preparatory Committee at its first session were made by the representatives of Austria, Senegal and Venezuela.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE ON ITS FIRST SESSION

29. At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted the report on its first session in its English version. In the absence of the report in the other official languages, some delegations reserved their final approval until its publication in those other versions.

ANNEX I

AGENDA

1. Opening of the session.

2. Election of officers.

3. Adoption of the agenda and rules of procedure.

4. Organization of work.

5. Agenda, rules of procedure, dates, duration, venue of and participation at the World Conference.

6. Preparatory meetings and activities at the international, regional and national levels.

7. Studies and other documentation for the World Conference.

8. Organization of the work of future sessions of the Preparatory Committee.

9. Adoption of the report of the Preparatory Committee.

ANNEX II

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AT ITS FIRST SESSION

PC/1. Convening of the World Conference on Human Rights

At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee decided without a vote, pursuant to the mandate conferred on it by the General Assembly in paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 45/155, to propose:

(a) That the provisional agenda for the World Conference and the documentation related thereto be taken up by the Preparatory Committee at its second session;

(b) That the draft rules of procedure for the World Conference be taken up by the Preparatory Committee at its second session;

(c) That the World Conference be convened at Berlin for a period of two weeks in 1993;

(d) That the Secretary-General give the Conference and the preparatory process thereto the widest possible publicity and that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure full coordination of public information activities in the area of human rights within the United Nations system.

PC/2. Future sessions of the Preparatory Committee

At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, pursuant to the mandate conferred on it by the General Assembly in paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 45/155, to recommend that it meet for three further sessions at Geneva, twice in 1992 and once in 1993, the next session to last two weeks and the two other sessions one to two weeks each, if this is agreed to be necessary. It decided furthermore to recommend that no more than two meetings take place simultaneously during the sessions of the Preparatory Committee and that no intersessional working group be established.

PC/3. Participation of representatives of least developed countries in the preparatory meetings and the Conference itself

At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee noted that a number of least developed countries had been unable to send representatives to its first session because of the absence of the voluntary contributions provided for in paragraph 7 of the General Assembly resolution 45/155. It decided, without a vote, to recommend to the General Assembly to reiterate its invitation for contributions of extrabudgetary resources to meet the cost of participation of representatives

of least developed countries in the preparatory meetings and the Conference itself. It further decided, also without a vote, that the General Assembly request the secretariat to intensify its efforts in this regard.

PC/4. Regional meetings in preparation for the World Conference on Human Rights

At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, in accordance with the objectives and provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/155, to recommend that regional meetings be convened for each region that so desires within the institutional framework or with the assistance of the regional commissions and that these meetings be financed as part of the preparatory work for the World Conference, as recommended for consideration by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1991/30 (annex, para. 8).

PC/5. Studies and documentation for the World Conference

At its 8th meeting, or 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, pursuant to the mandate conferred on it by the General Assembly in paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 45/155, to recommend that the Secretary-General be requested to prepare the following documentation as soon as possible and to report to the next session of the Preparatory Committee on the progress made:

(1) A limited number of short, analytical and action-oriented studies on issues referred to in paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 45/155 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1991/30, in particular in paragraph 2 of the annex thereto, and also bearing in mind documentation prepared for, as well as statements made at, the first session of the Preparatory Committee;

(2) Reports of meetings which have been organized under the auspices of the United Nations human rights programme pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/155;

(3) A reference guide to all United Nations studies and reports on human rights or related aspects;

(4) An update of United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights;

(5) An update of A Compilation of International Instruments and Status of International Instruments including also texts of regional instruments on human rights.

It further decided, also without a vote, that the experts and consultants employed for that purpose should be selected with due regard to equitable geographic distribution.

PC/6. Participation of human rights experts in the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference

At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, to recommend that the General Assembly encourage the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, the Chairmen or other designated members of human rights bodies including the Chairman of bodies established under international human rights agreements or their designated representatives, as well as special and thematic rapporteurs and the Chairmen or designated members of working groups, to contribute as observers by taking part as appropriate in the work of the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference.

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

Documents issued in the general series

Symbol	Agenda item	Title
A/CONF.157/PC/1	3	Provisional agenda
A/CONF.157/PC/1/Add.1	3	Annotations to the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretary-General
A/CONF.157/PC/2/Rev.1	4	Organization of work
A/CONF.157/PC/3	5, 6, 7 and 8	Summary of the discussions on the World Conference on Human Rights at the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights: note by the Chairman of the Commission at its forty-seventh session.
A/CONF.157/PC/4	5	Letter dated 22 May 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations
A/CONF.157/PC/5	5	Note verbale dated 17 July 1991 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Argentina to the International Organizations at Geneva addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations
A/CONF.157/PC/6	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by Governments
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.1	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by specialized agencies and United Nations organs

Documents issued in the general series (continued)

Symbol	Agenda item	Title
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.2	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.3	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by specialized agencies and United Nations organs
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.4	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by United Nations human rights treaty bodies
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.5	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by Governments
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.6	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.7	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.8	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status
A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.9	5, 6, and 7	Report of the Secretary-General: Recommendations on the World Conference and its preparation submitted by a human rights body

Documents issued in the general series (continued)

Symbol	Agenda item	Title
A/CONF.157/PC/7	7	Letter dated 20 August 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights and Secretary-General of the World Conference on Human Rights
A/CONF.157/PC/8	5	Note by the Secretary: Draft provisional rules of procedure of the Conference
A/CONF.157/PC/9	5	Note verbale dated 21 August 1991 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Argentina to the International Organizations at Geneva addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations
A/CONF.157/PC/10	5, 6, 7 and 8	Letter dated 11 September 1991 from the head of delegation of the United States of America to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights
A/CONF.157/PC/11	5, 6, 7 and 8	Letter dated 13 September 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations Office at Geneva, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean group, to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights
A/CONF.157/PC/12	5, 6, 7 and 8	Introductory statement to the Preparatory Committee by the Secretary-General of the World Conference
A/CONF.157/PC/13	5, 6, 7 and 8	Report of the Preparatory Committee on its first session

Documents issued in the limited series

A/CONF.157/PC/CRP.1	7	Informal note by the secretariat: Possible topics for background documentation

Documents issued in the limited series (continued)

Symbol	Agenda item	Title
A/CONF.157/PC/CRP.2	5, 6, and 7	Note verbale dated 27 August 1991 from the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Centre for Human Rights
A/CONF.157/PC/L.1	9	Draft report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights
A/CONF.157/PC/L.2	9	List of draft decisions for consideration by the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference at its first session

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